

Fear Often Causes Painful Dental Ills

(This is one of a series of articles on dental health prepared by the Harbor Dental Society, an affiliate of the American Dental Association.)

Don't let the fear of pain result in costly delays in dental treatment.

Modern dentistry has at

hand the means to reduce or eliminate pain completely. Yet fear of pain is a major reason why three out of five Americans don't visit their dentist even once a year.

First of all, delayed dental treatment means a worsening of patients' suffering.

Treatment experience

becomes more difficult and more expensive. Discomfort resembles a pain killer but which has no pain reliever in it.

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problem. If dental treatment is likely to cause discomfort, your dentist will give you an anesthetic in advance of treatment. These anesthetics can block pain completely and are without harmful effects. Local anesthetics and analgesics are used routinely in dental

offices today, and where major dental surgery is required, a patient can be hospitalized to take advantage of hospital surgical equipment and general anesthetics. New high-speed cutting instruments or drills are another development in the fight against discomfort in the dental chair. Two out of

three dentists use cutting instruments that work at speeds of from 30,000 to over 250,000 revolutions per minute.

THESE SPEEDS reduce the bone-conducted noises and vibration. They clean out decayed enamel with a fraction of the time required by low-speed instruments. They also spray a jet of water on the tooth to keep it cool. This helps eliminate another major cause of discomfort—the heat generated by the rapidly

revolving bur. Aside from anesthetics and high-speed instruments, the measures you take yourself are the best safeguard against pain. Take care of your teeth. Give them the daily good care they require and obtain regular, routine checkups by your family dentist. If you give him the opportunity, he will detect difficulties early before they become major disorders. Early treatment is seldom unpleasant.

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